

Message Text

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ORIGIN MED-03

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL MILAN
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AMED

SUBJECT: DRINKING WATER POLLUTION IN MILAN

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REFS: A) MILAN NOS. 1339; 1266; 1082; B) STATE NOS. 149707
AND 154890

1. RECEIVED REPORT ON QUOTE POLLUTION OF MILAN WATER
BEARING STRATUM BY CHLORIDE SOLVENTS. UNQUOTE. STATE 149707
PARAGRAPH 4 AND 5 STILL HOLD.

2. THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN NOVEMBER 1974
INITIATED THE NATIONAL ORGANICS RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY. ONE
OBJECTIVE WAS TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE PRESENCE OF
THE CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS AMONGST OTHER COMPOUNDS IN
FINISHED WATER AND TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THESE COM-
POUNDS ARE FORMED BY CHLORINATION. THE SURVEY FINDINGS IN-
DICATED THAT THE CHLORINATION RESULTS IN THE FORMATION
OF THE CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS AND OTHER HALOMETHANES.

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3. FURTHER ANALYSIS SHOWED THAT RAW WATER WITH LOW TUR-
BIDITY RESULTED IN FINISHED WATER (AFTER CHLORINATION) THAT
WAS RELATIVELY FREE OF CHLOROFORM AND RELATED HALOGENATED
COMPOUNDS BUT WATER WITH A HIGH ORGANIC CONCENTRATION AND/
OR TURBIDITY SHOWED LARGER QUANTITIES OF THIS COMPOUND
AFTER CHLORINATION. EPA CONCLUDES THAT THE MAJOR SOURCE
OF CHLOROFORM IN DRINKING WATER IS CHLORINATION PRACTICE

NOT INDUSTRIAL DISCHARGE ALTHOUGH THE PRESENCE OF ORGANIC MATERIAL MAY BE FROM INDUSTRIAL OR AGRICULTURAL DISCHARGE.

4. AS YET NO ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE EXISTS FOR CHLORINE AS A DISINFECTANT THAT PRODUCES A RESIDUAL EFFECT AND THE HEALTH HAZARDS OF FOREGOING CHLORINATION WOULD BE SEVERE.

5. THERE ARE WAYS OF REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF HALOGENATED ORGANICS IN WATER. ONE WOULD BE TO PRE-SETTLE AND CLARIFY THE WATER WITH A FLOCCULENT BEFORE CHLORINATION, AND MOVING THE POINT OF CHLORINATION TO THE LAST STEP IN THE TREATMENT PROCESS. THIS, HOWEVER, WOULD REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OF THE MILAN AUTHORITIES.

6. THE COMPOUNDS HAVE RELATIVELY LOW BOILING POINTS AND A VIGOROUS FIVE MINUTE BOIL WILL LOWER THE CONCENTRATION.

7. SINCE COOKING PROCEDURES AND THE MAKING OF INFUSIONS LIKE TEA AND COFFEE REQUIRE VIGOROUS BOILING, NO FURTHER STEPS ARE REQUIRED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT PRESSURE COOKING IS TO BE AVOIDED UNLESS THE WATER HAS BEEN TREATED BEFOREHAND.

8. PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. WILL POUCH ORIGINAL EPA REPORT TO YOU AS SOON AS AVAILABLE.

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